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Asn Ala Lys Thr Lys Pro Arg Glu Glu Gln Tyr Asn Ser Thr Tyr Arg
    290                 295                 300

Val Val Ser Val Leu Thr Val Leu His Gln Asp Trp Leu Asn Gly Lys
305                 310                 315                 320

Glu Tyr Lys Cys Lys Val Ser Asn Lys Ala Leu Pro Ala Pro Ile Glu
                325                 330                 335

Lys Thr Ile Ser Lys Ala Lys Gly Gln Pro Arg Glu Pro Gln Val Tyr
            340                 345                 350

Thr Leu Pro Pro Ser Arg Glu Glu Met Thr Lys Asn Gln Val Ser Leu
        355                 360                 365

Thr Cys Leu Val Lys Gly Phe Tyr Pro Ser Asp Ile Ala Val Glu Trp
    370                 375                 380

Glu Ser Asn Gly Gln Pro Glu Asn Asn Tyr Lys Thr Thr Pro Pro Val
385                 390                 395                 400

Leu Asp Ser Asp Gly Ser Phe Phe Leu Tyr Ser Lys Leu Thr Val Asp
                405                 410                 415

Lys Ser Arg Trp Gln Gln Gly Asn Val Phe Ser Cys Ser Val Met His
            420                 425                 430

Glu Ala Leu His Asn His Tyr Thr Gln Lys Ser Leu Ser Leu Ser Pro
        435                 440                 445

Gly
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What is claimed is:

1. A method for purifying an antibody from a composition comprising the antibody and a contaminant, which method comprises the following steps performed sequentially:

(a) binding the antibody to a cation exchange material with an equilibration buffer at a first conductivity;

(b) washing the cation exchange material with a wash buffer, wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer increases from a second conductivity that is higher than the first conductivity to a third conductivity during the washing;

(c) passing a fixed volume of wash buffer at the third conductivity over the cation exchange material; and

(d) eluting the antibody from the cation exchange material with an elution buffer at a fourth conductivity that is higher than the third conductivity.

2. The method of claim **1** wherein the cation exchange resin comprises sulphopropyl immobilized on agarose.

3. The method of claim **1** wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer increases at a constant rate from the second conductivity to the third conductivity.

4. The method of claim **1** wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer increases at two or more different rates from the second conductivity to the third conductivity.

5. The method of claim **4** wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer increases at a first rate for a first segment of the washing, at a second rate for a second segment of the washing and at a third rate for a third segment of the washing.

6. The method of claim **5** wherein the wash buffer comprises a mixture of equilibration buffer and elution buffer.

7. The method of claim **6** wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer is increased by increasing the proportion of elution buffer in the wash buffer.

8. The method of claim **7** wherein the proportion of elution buffer in the wash buffer increases at a constant rate of about 6% during the first segment, at a constant rate of about 3.5% during the second segment and at a constant rate of about 2% during the third segment.

9. The method of claim **7** wherein the proportion of elution buffer in the wash buffer increases from about 26% to about 54% during the first segment, from about 54% to about 61% during the second segment and from about 61% to about 74% during the second segment.

10. The method of claim **5** wherein the cation exchange material is washed with about 5 column volumes of wash buffer in the first segment, about 2 column volumes of wash buffer in the second segment and about 6 column volumes of wash buffer in the third segment.

11. The method of claim **1** wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer is increased by increasing the proportion of elution buffer in the wash buffer.

12. The method of claim **1** wherein the conductivity of the wash buffer is increased by increasing the salt concentration therein.

13. The method of claim **1** wherein the fixed volume of wash buffer passed over the cation exchange material in step (c) is between about 0.4 column volumes and about 1.0 column volumes.

14. The method of claim **1** further comprising washing the ion exchange material with a regeneration buffer after step (d).

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